

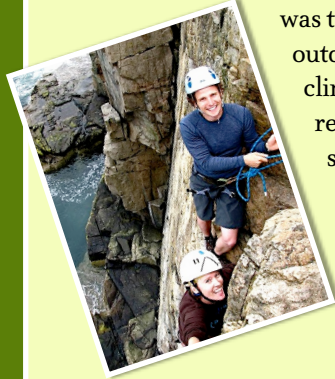


the gillespies and the Good News

July 1, 2010

Our Dear Friends,

This past week we returned home, safe and sound, from our Lifelines training project in Acadia National Park. We had an awesome time! The purpose of our month in Acadia was to learn a new way to connect with the hearts of college students. We used outdoor adventure activities (like sea kayaking, mountain biking and rock climbing) as a vehicle for students to learn about themselves, experience healthy relationships and take steps to grow. We are really excited about the possibilities of using this style of ministry at Dartmouth. The majority of students up here love the outdoors and are very out-of-touch with their own soul. We hope that this kind of ministry will help us to better engage the hearts of students, to demonstrate that God's acceptance of them through Jesus can truly meet their needs.



But how, you might ask, could *rock climbing* be an “in” into a person's heart? Here's an example of a program that we designed and led last month for a rock climbing trip.

Objective: To be the first team to have all 3 of your climbers reach the top of the cliff. The 4th person picked for your team [*by the team captain, in a draft*] will not be allowed to climb. The first team to finish will get a prize.

Restrictions: You cannot look at the different climbing routes before the competition begins [*the three teams were given routes that varied widely in difficulty*].

Results: The team with the middle-difficulty route won, coming in just before the team with the easiest route. The team with the most difficult route wasn't able to finish (we had actually given them a route that we knew they wouldn't be able to finish). When the competition was over, we sat down and talked about the experience. The strongest reactions were from the three people who weren't able to climb at all. One struggled with even cheering her team on, feeling like there was no place for her to participate, and so therefore her presence was of little value.

How does this relate to the gospel? During most of life we are so concerned with wanting others to like us and wanting to feel good about ourselves that we hide our true reactions, from ourselves and others. It's under stressful situations that our honest feelings and thoughts are exposed. The woman mentioned above, when sharing about how she disengaged during the competition, was able to think through with the group what other life situations cause her to disengage and where her value as a person comes from. Gaining access to that heart issue created an open door to talk about what makes a person acceptable, the wounds we all have from being accepted only when we meet others' expectations, and how we long for acceptance but often fear that no one would accept us if they truly knew who we were. One of the great beauties of the gospel is that God sees all that we are, knows that we never meet his standards, and so gave His Son, who would meet the standard, that we could have his full acceptance.

Prayer Requests

- That God would give us creativity and wisdom as we consider how to use this training to further the work of the gospel at Dartmouth
- For God to convict and empower our students to be a loving representation of and voice for Jesus, wherever they are this summer
- For God's provision of new financial support this summer, especially next month as we travel to the Midwest to share about our ministry with new people
- That we would be refreshed and truly rest well this month -- we're pooped!

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